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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

USDA ANNOUNCES REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPORTING MEXICAN ANIMAL TROPHIES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 7—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is alerting hunters and others wishing to import animal trophies from Mexico about requirements to prevent the entry of ticks into the United States.

“We are taking these measures to prevent the reintroduction and establishment of the *Boophilus* tick in the United States,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. “This tick, which carries bovine babesiosis—a serious cattle disease often called Texas cattle fever—was eradicated from the United States in 1943,” Glosser said.

Animal carcasses with hides attached are not eligible for importation. Hides that have been tanned or soaked in a saltwater solution with mineral acid, and dry racks (antlers) can be imported from Mexico without restriction provided they are certified to be of Mexican origin.

Raw and untreated hides and racks may qualify for entry only if accompanied by a certificate signed by a veterinary official of the Mexican government stating that the hides and racks have been treated for ticks. Alternatively, they may be dipped at one of several Mexican cattle export facilities along the U.S.-Mexico border and certified by the Mexican or U.S. port official.

If hides and racks are presented for entry without treatment and certification, they must be taken under USDA seal to a USDA-approved establishment for processing.

Margaret Webb (301) 436-7799

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COLOMBIA ELIGIBLE FOR MORE BARLEY MALT UNDER EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Sept. 7—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced an opportunity for sales of an additional 35,000 metric tons of barley malt to Colombia under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

Sales of barley malt will be made to buyers in Colombia through normal commercial channels at competitive prices. The export sales will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses in the form of commodities from the inventory of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in the Colombian market.

This allocation will be valid for a one-year period as provided for in the invitation for offers. Details of the program, including an invitation for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

For more information call Paul Cummins, (202) 382-9240, or Richard Godsey, (202) 447-3224. For a tape-recorded message announcing the issuance of invitations under EEP call the CCC Operations Hotline, (202) 447-2042.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

#

U.S. DONATES CORN TO URUGUAY

WASHINGTON, Sept. 7—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has donated 20,000 metric tons of U.S. corn to Uruguay, according to F. Paul Dickerson, general sales manager of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service.

"Uruguay has been a market for U.S. corn, and this donation is part of the U.S. commitment to help Uruguay and its people during a difficult period of economic adjustment," Dickerson said.

The corn was donated under the Food for Progress Program, which supports the development of free enterprise in the agricultural economies of recipient countries. "The United States supports the commitment of the government of Uruguay to strengthening its economy, particularly its agricultural sector," Dickerson said.

The donation was made under Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949, which authorizes the donation of surplus commodities owned by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation to benefit needy people overseas.

For further information, contact James F. Keefer, FAS, at (202) 382-9263.

Rebecca Broeking (202) 475-4291

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USDA ANNOUNCES 1990-CROP CONTRACTED ADDITIONAL PEANUT POUNDAGE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 7—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation today announced that 2,260,541,975 pounds, or 1,130,271 short tons, of additional peanuts from the 1990-crop have been contracted by handlers.

Additional peanuts are the crop produced over a farm's quota or from farms without quotas.

The final quantity of peanuts delivered under these contracts may vary due to actual production and the terms under which handlers and producers have agreed to deliver contracted peanuts.

By growing areas, contracted quantities are:

	Pounds	Short tons
Southeast	1,735,576,283	867,788
Southwest	343,509,402	171,755
Virginia/Carolina	181,456,290	90,728

John C. Ryan (202) 447-6788.

#

CCC PURCHASES COMMODITIES FOR DONATION TO MIDDLE EAST REFUGEES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 7—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation has begun purchasing immediately from U.S. suppliers rice, vegetable oil and wheat flour for donation to feed refugees in the Middle East.

The purchases are being made by the CCC in cooperation with the Agency for International Development. The foodstuffs are to be shipped from U.S. Gulf ports by Sept. 30, destined for the port of Aquaba, Jordan or a pre-positioned site to be used as needs dictate.

"The CCC will buy 20,000 metric tons of rice, 2,000 metric tons of vegetable oil and 5,000 metric tons of wheat flour to be made available to the refugees through the World Food Program under Title II of Public Law 480," Yeutter said. "This action is being taken for humanitarian reasons to help alleviate the suffering of the large number of people of many nationalities who have fled Iraq and Kuwait following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait."

At the same time, purchases from the U.S. market will help U.S. producers of commodities who have been affected by the Middle East crisis.

The United States, through AID and the CCC, annually donates over \$550 million worth of food under Title II for emergency and long-term humanitarian programs.

In a related effort, the U.S. recently approved a \$50-million increase in Egypt's FY 1990 P.L. 480 Title I wheat program which will also serve to relieve the pressure on Egyptian food supplies caused by refugees returning from the Gulf area.

These foodstuffs should bring much needed relief to the Middle East refugees, Yeutter said.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623

#

USDA EXPANDS EARLY WARNING SYSTEM FOR HARMFUL FOOD BACTERIA

WASHINGTON, Sept. 10—U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists have added three food poisoning bacteria to a computer program that analyzes what inhibits or promotes bacterial growth.

Microbiologist Robert L. Buchanan of USDA's Agricultural Research Service said the bacteria are *Shigella*, *Aeromonas* and *Staphylococcus*—three types that occur in meat, dairy products and seafood. Originally, the computer program was developed as an "early warning system" for food companies to monitor *Salmonella* and *Listeria* growth patterns.

Buchanan said the computer analysis could cut by 75 percent the number of tests now done by food companies when developing new or improved foods.

To predict the growth rate of various harmful bacteria, the program requires five key pieces of information. A food company would specify the levels of storage temperature, oxygen, acidity, salt and sodium nitrite concentration, which all interact to control a microorganism's growth, Buchanan said.

Companies know the levels of each factor needed to limit pathogen growth in existing food products that conform to standards established by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service or the Food and Drug Administration. But, when companies develop new foods or refine existing product formulations, Buchanan said, numerous tests must be done to arrive at the proper level needed for each factor to control pathogen growth.

"Essentially we've done the experiments for food companies," said Buchanan of the ARS' Microbial Food Safety Research Unit in Philadelphia. "The data we have collected helped establish the growth characteristics of the bacteria and the program provides it in a form that is easy to use."

For example, a food company could use the program to help develop a low-salt ham. A desired level of salt would be entered into the program. A combination of salt and the other factors dictating pathogen growth could be evaluated using mathematical equations, giving the user estimates of the growth rate, Buchanan said.

“You could decrease salt, say by 1.5 percent, and estimate what other factors could be manipulated to prevent pathogen growth. This should greatly decrease the number of experiments that would have to be performed,” he said.

Buchanan said scientists at the Eastern Regional Research Center are still collecting information on the three new additions. He said the program in its current form provides “reasonable estimates” for *Shigella*, *Aeromonas* and *Staphylococcus* growth. Additional information on the three pathogens, particularly on their growth without oxygen, should be added to the program within a year, he said.

Meanwhile, scientists are expanding the existing program for *Listeria* making it applicable to a wider range of foods, Buchanan said.

Bruce Kinzel (301) 344-2739

#

USDA SCHEDULES PUBLIC MEETINGS ON PROPOSED BIOTECHNOLOGY RESEARCH GUIDELINES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 10—The U.S. Department of Agriculture will hold meetings in California, Missouri, North Carolina, and the District of Columbia this month to seek public comments on “USDA Research Guidelines for Assessing the Environmental Impact of Research Involving Organisms with Deliberately Modified Hereditary Traits.”

Dr. Alvin A. Young, director of USDA’s Office of Agricultural Biotechnology, said USDA will use the guidelines to evaluate safety measures necessary to protect human health and the environment for proposed research projects involving genetically modified organisms. “These guidelines will provide the framework within which such safety decisions can be made on a sound scientific basis,” he said.

Young said the meetings will provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the guidelines and thereby help shape USDA policy on field testing modified organisms. After assessing the comments, OAB will prepare final guidelines and publish them in the Federal Register. The meetings are scheduled for the following dates and locations:

—Sept. 17 at the Capital Plaza Holiday Inn, Granada Room, 300 J. Street, Sacramento, Calif.;

—Sept. 19 at the Sheraton St. Louis, Laclede Room, 910 N. 7th Street, St. Louis, Mo.;

—Sept. 21 at the North Raleigh Hilton, Salon F, 3415 Old Wake Forest Road, Raleigh, N.C.; and

—Sept. 26 at the Aerospace Center, Conference Room A, 10th Floor, 901 D Street, S.W., Washington, D.C.

All meetings begin at 9 a.m. local time, except for the one in St. Louis, which will include two separate sessions. The first will begin at 8 a.m., the second at 1:30 p.m.

At all of the meetings, an opportunity will be provided for participants to make comments for the public record.

Marti Asner (703) 235-4416

#

COLOMBIA ELIGIBLE FOR MORE WHEAT UNDER EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Sept. 10—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced an opportunity for sales of an additional 500,000 metric tons of U.S. wheat to Colombia under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

Sales of wheat will be made to buyers in Colombia through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. The export sales will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses in the form of commodities from the inventory of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in the Colombian market.

Today's allocation, added to the 15,000 tons remaining under previous allocations, brings the amount of wheat currently available to Colombia under the EEP to 515,000 metric tons.

This allocation will be valid for a one-year period as provided for in the invitation for offers. Details of the program, including an invitation for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

For more information call Mark Rowse, (202) 382-9240, or Larry McElvain, (202) 447-3224. For a tape-recorded message announcing the

issuance of invitations under EEP call the CCC Operations Hotline, (202) 447-2042.

Rebecca Broeking (202) 447-3448

#

USDA LIFTS CITRUS QUARANTINE FROM MOST OF FLORIDA

WASHINGTON, Sept. 10—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is lifting its citrus canker quarantine from Florida, except for parts of Manatee County.

“The current quarantine on most citrus was prompted by the possibility that a new strain of citrus canker had developed,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. “Recent scientific reports indicate that the new problem, popularly called the ‘Florida nursery strain,’ isn’t really citrus canker. The minor leaf-spot problems that the nursery strain causes in young trees do not pose a threat to the industry, according to our experience during the past five years.”

Authentic citrus canker—so-called Asiatic or “A” strains—infested two commercial groves and several residential areas in Florida, beginning in 1986. This disease is caused by a bacterium that inflicts extensive damage to plant tissues and fruit of citrus, kumquats and some ornamental plants. Without controls, the disease can spread rapidly.

No outbreaks of the “A” strain have occurred outside of Manatee County in the past two years, however. Glosser said a five-mile quarantine around the two infested groves there is adequate to prevent the spread of the disease. Therefore, the citrus quarantine on the rest of Florida, imposed in 1984, is being lifted.

A proposal to lift the quarantine was first published on March 27 and was the subject of two public hearings—in Palmetto, Fla., on April 25 and in Ontario, Calif., on May 15. In preparing the final rule, APHIS officials considered suggestions from these hearings and written comments on the proposal. This rule will appear in the Federal Register Sept. 11 and will take effect Sept. 18.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

#

YEUTTER APPOINTS FOOD SERVICE ADVISORY BOARD

WASHINGTON, Sept. 10—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today appointed six members to the General Advisory Board for the National Food Service Management Institute at the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

The general advisory board will develop a long range strategic plan for the institute. The seven-member board is made up of representatives from the food service industry, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service, school food services and universities. The board members appointed today are:

John R. Cady, president and chief executive officer, National Food Processors Association, Washington, D.C.; Elizabeth Bender, manager, Food Service, Dayton Board of Education, Dayton, Ohio; Eileen Matthews, professor, Food Service Administration, Department of Food Science, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.; Rachelle Bagley, director, Child Nutrition and Commodity Distribution Programs, Salem, Ore.; Jeanette Phillips, Chair and Professor, Department of Home Economics, University of Mississippi, Oxford, Miss.; and Judith Lewis, confidential assistant to the administrator, FNS, Alexandria, Va.

The remaining slot will be filled by a representative of the Research, Education, and Technical Advisory Board of the Institute, and will be named once that board is functional.

The purpose of the institute is to improve the operation and quality of child nutrition programs. A five-year cooperative agreement between FNS and the University of Mississippi, signed March 23, established the institute. The institute will focus on:

- helping schools and school food service staffs develop efficient and cost-effective ways to provide nutritious meals;
- establishing a national center for research and development of effective management principles;
- providing education and training to food service managers and workers; and
- establishing a clearinghouse for information retrieval and dissemination.

Phil Shanholtzer (703) 756-3276

#

USDA DECLARES NEVADA FREE OF CATTLE BRUCELLOSIS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today declared Nevada free of cattle brucellosis.

With the addition of Nevada, a total of 29 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands are now free of this costly disease, according to James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

"I want the people of Nevada and all those who cooperate in our fight against brucellosis to know that I appreciate their hard work," Glosser said. "This includes the livestock industry, state officials, the veterinary profession and many other organizations."

A state is declared free of brucellosis when, after 12 consecutive months, no cattle are found to be infected and when the state has met other program requirements. Cattle owners in "free" states benefit by no longer having to test their animals for brucellosis before they can be sold. Savings will amount to more than \$100,000 per year in Nevada, Glosser added.

States not considered free of brucellosis are put into one of two classes, depending on the rate of infection. Class "A" status means that no more than 0.25 percent of the herds are infected. Today, 15 states are in that category, with several of these almost entirely free of infection. The remaining 6 states are in Class "B", which indicates a somewhat higher infection rate.

Brucellosis, sometimes called "Bang's disease," causes abortion, reduced fertility and lower milk yields in cattle. Nationwide, cattle producers still incur annual production losses of more than \$12 million from brucellosis. Humans can be infected by drinking unpasteurized milk from infected animals or by handling aborted fetuses from brucellosis-infected animals.

An interim rule redesignating Nevada's brucellosis status became effective Sept. 6 and will be published in the Sept. 11 Federal Register. Comments on the action will be accepted if they are received on or before Nov. 13. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 90-164 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected

at USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

#

FGIS ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE TO REVIEW AGENCY FINANCIAL MATTERS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11—A subcommittee of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service Advisory Committee will hold a public meeting Thursday, Sept. 20, at 10 a.m. at the Radisson Inn Airport, Greater Cincinnati Airport, Hebron, Ky. The purpose of the meeting will be to review and prepare recommendations to the full FGIS Advisory Committee on financial matters affecting the agency.

The subcommittee was appointed at the regular FGIS advisory committee meeting on Aug. 9. The subcommittee's agenda includes a review of the financial status of FGIS, an examination of cost-cutting measures, a discussion of unit versus hourly fees, and a review of whether fee adjustments should be made annually or on some other basis.

The meeting will be open to the public. However, public participation will be limited to written statements unless otherwise requested by the subcommittee chairman. Persons other than members who wish to address the subcommittee at the meeting or submit written statements before, at, or after the meeting should contact Marion Hartman, subcommittee chairman, 8761 Dragoo Road, Hillsboro, Ohio 45133; telephone (513) 393-2139.

Allen A. Atwood (202) 475-3367

#

U.S.-EUROPEAN COMMISSION TASK FORCE ON BIOTECHNOLOGY MEETS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11—Members of a new task force designed to strengthen scientific ties between the United States and the Commission of the European Communities met today and Monday at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This initial session of the U.S.-E.C.

Community Task Force on Biotechnology Research was opened by Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter and Dr. Allan Bromley, science and technology advisor to President Bush. The discussions focused on the structure and organization of biotechnology research.

Dr. Charles E. Hess, assistant secretary of agriculture for science and education, serves as the U.S. chairperson for the task force. In remarks to the group Monday, Dr. Hess said "biotechnology may one day have a greater impact on our lives than any of the other revolutionary technological advances of the 20th Century. Establishment of the international task force is a recognition of the importance placed upon the need for international consultation on biotechnology research and development."

Dr. Paolo Fasella, director general of the E.C. Directorate XII (science, research and development), serves as the European chairperson of the task force. He said that the envisioned exchange of opinions on the scientific aspects of biotechnology will be beneficial to both parties.

The task force, which provides a mechanism for bilateral discussions between science policymakers in the E.C. and the U.S., was formally established September 7 by Dr. Bromley and Dr. Filippo Maria Pandolfi, vice president of the Commission of the European Communities. The U.S. side of the task force reports to the Federal Coordinating Committee for Science, Engineering and Technology which is chaired by Dr. Bromley.

The task force discussed significant new developments in medical, environmental, energy, and agricultural biotechnology; funding of biotechnology research; and factors which affect the research environment such as public acceptance and socio-economic issues. The members are addressing topics for possible coordinated efforts by participating agencies, including public information and the scientific aspects of risk assessment.

The task force is scheduled to meet annually. The next meeting will take place in mid-1991 in Brussels.

Martha Steinbock (202) 447-5923

#

FORTY-NINE INDICTED IN MISSISSIPPI FOR FOOD STAMP TRAFFICKING

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11—According to U.S. Department of Agriculture Inspector General Leon Snead, USDA special agents, deputy U.S. marshals and members of several local law enforcement agencies in Mississippi today began serving arrest warrants on 49 residents charged with food stamp trafficking.

Federal grand juries in the Northern and Southern Judicial Districts of Mississippi returned sealed indictments in August and September charging all 49 defendants with felony violations involving food stamp trafficking. Several of the defendants were charged with conspiracy to either purchase food stamps for cash, or exchanging crack cocaine and marijuana for food stamps, or both.

Snead said the indictments were part of a fourteen-month investigation entitled "Operation Grand Slam," which focused on identifying businesses and individuals throughout Mississippi who were illegally trafficking in food stamps. The maximum penalty for unauthorized acquisition and possession of food stamps is five years in prison and a fine not to exceed \$250,000.

The Mississippi residents who were indicted and for whom arrest warrants have been issued are Richard L. Ashmore, Jr., 31, Charleston; Lee Roy Carter, 45 and Morgan Lee, 50, both of Cleveland; Marvin E. Conwell, 32, Mound Bayou; Samuel Davis, 31 and Vanessa Davis, age unknown, both of Darling; Archie L. Flowers, 48; Alvin W. Hoover, 62 and Bill G. Mills, 61, all of Winona; Donald Gann, 40; James E. Hodges, 31; J. E. Mitchell, 62; Bobbie Jean Neal, 36; George L. Pierce, 58; Georgia G. Robinson, 45; James Smith, 33; Joe K. Matthews, 63; Martha L. McMinn, 60 and Gladys Spane, 46, all of Greenwood; John H. Harris, 51; Michael A. Harris, 31; Rosa Mardis, 49 and Walter Tillison, 37, all of Grenada; Emma Jane Howard, 25 and Cecil R. Suggs, 63, both of Aberdeen; Gordon Lott, 70, McCarley; William H. Lott, 66, Sidon; Kirk Miller, Jr., 65 and Ben D. Stahl, 59, both of Kosciusko; Willie Sanders, 40, Artesia; Willie Wise, 71, Greenville; Bobby Jean Benton, 22; Jerry Lynn Cooley, 34; Helen Flanigan, 40; Ray Anthony Hall, 36; Ronald Harbin, 26; Calvin C. Jordon, 32; C. Linton Marsh, 36; Loyde Moss, Sr., 49; Patricia A. Page, 32; William Puckett, 50; Sandra Smith, 40; Cherie R. Thomas, 30; Henry M. Thomas, 30 and Willie E. Wilson, 42, all of Laurel; William L. Cain, 50, Sallis; Sheila

L. Price, 37 and Ruby Seawood, 48, both of Durant; and Johnny Jones, 35, Mayersville.

Twenty-two of the 49 persons indicted are owners or employees of 17 Mississippi retail stores authorized by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, to accept food stamps for eligible food items. The firms with whom the 22 indicted individuals are associated are Ashmore Grocery, Charleston; Renova kwik Mart and Morgan's Food Center, both of Cleveland; Davis Grocery, Darling; Depot Produce; Wilson's Grocery #2; Mitchell's Grocery, and Ash Street Convenience Store, all of Greenwood; Joe S. Messina Grocery, Grenada; McAdams's Grocery, McAdams; Northend Grocery, Mound Bayou; Mills Grocery and Alvin's Farmers Market, both of Winona; Little Giant Curb Store and Hoy Community Grocery, both of Laurel; Little Richard Grocery, Mayersville; and K's Corner, Sallis.

Snead said that several of the cases involving FNS authorized retail stores were investigated jointly with FNS' compliance branch.

The cases are being prosecuted by the United States Attorneys for the Northern and Southern Districts of Mississippi.

David F. Dickson (202) 447-6701

#

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 8.18 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 7.22 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 7.16 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.09 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

- long grain, \$5.14 per hundredweight;
- medium grain, \$4.65 per hundredweight;
- short grain, \$4.63 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Sept. 18 at 3 p.m. EDT, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-7923

#

PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR EGYPT

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 100,000 metric tons of soft white wheat for delivery to Egypt during the 1990-91 marketing year.

The marketing year for wheat began June 1.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

#

NEMATODES AND HUNGRY BACTERIA GANG UP ON CITRUS WEEVIL LARVAE

WASHINGTON—Citrus growers may have a little help from below. Microscopic worms—or nematodes—and a hungry bacterial companion in the soil have citrus weevil larvae on their list of favorite foods.

William J. Schroeder, a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist in Orlando, Fla., has found that the bacteria and three species of nematodes, *Steinernema feltiae*, *S. glaseri* and *Heterorhabditis heliothidis*, can help growers of orange, lemon, lime and grapefruit save millions of dollars in crop damage from the citrus weevil.

The bacteria depend on the nematodes to hunt down weevil larvae. Once the nematodes enter a larvae's body, they release the bacteria. Then the bacteria return this favor by acting as the nematode's personal 'chef.'

About 80 percent of larval populations in citrus groves can be wiped out by this aggressive teamwork, making a heavy dent in future adult populations, he said.

In 1964 the citrus weevil—also known as the sugarcane root stock borer—made its unwelcome debut into the United States from the West Indies. Today, about 10 percent of Florida citrus crops are damaged by the weevil.

But the culprit is not so much the adult weevil as it is the larvae, said Schroeder, a research entomologist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

Dropping from eggs blanketed between two leaves, the weevil larvae quickly bore into the ground at the base of trees. Once underground, they feast on the roots, hindering the root's ability to transport nutrients and water to the rest of the tree.

"Citrus trees will produce fewer and smaller fruit," says Schroeder who is based at the U.S. Horticultural Research Laboratory in Orlando.

He adds that root-damage from the larvae can kill young citrus trees and reduce yields in older trees to the extent that growers will abandon them.

Fortunately, the nematodes—studied by Schroeder at a Lake Gem citrus grove in Florida—harbor bacteria that find the destructive larvae appetizing.

"The bacteria," says Schroeder, "will destroy the entire internal structure of the larvae. They start in the haemolymph (circulatory fluid in invertebrates) and cause blood poisoning which kills the larvae. They go on to reduce the interior of the insect to a 'gummy' substance.

"It is the byproducts—the amino acids and carbohydrates—in a liquid form," that the nematodes enjoy supping on, says Schroeder.

But the nematodes only hang around as long as the food source lasts.

In Schroeder's field study, the only entree on the nematode's menu was the larvae. Once the larvae—or other food sources—are gone, "the nematode will die, as well as the bacteria," says Schroeder. "One cannot live without the other."

Other than cultivated fields, the nematodes in the wild will also hunt down a number of other pests such as cutworms, other weevil species, moth larvae and cockroaches.

For this reason, he says, these three nematode species have become an attractive natural alternative to pesticides. Growers of cranberries, artichokes, rice, ornamental plants and many other crops rely on the nematodes.

“In California,” he says, “the nematodes are used against the artichoke plume moth and in the foliage industry they are used to control the black vine weevil.”

Some Ohio groundskeepers are using the nematodes to protect the lush grass of golf courses from cutworm and Japanese beetle larvae attacks.

For citrus growers, says Schroeder, “the nematodes must be applied when larvae are in the soil, usually in the fall and winter months.” He recommends midway through February. The nematodes can easily be applied using a tractorrigged pump, portable sprayers or irrigation.

Schroeder says that although we can’t see them, nematodes—which are harmless to humans—are in soils around the world and in the gardens in our backyards.

Jan Suszkiw (301) 344-2002

Issued: September 12, 1990

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION TO MEET SEPTEMBER 18-19

WASHINGTON, Sept. 12—The National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection will meet Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 18-19, in College Station, Texas, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the College Station Hilton Conference Center, 801 University Drive East.

Topics to be discussed include: the Food Safety and Inspection Service’s implementation of Total Quality Management; the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system initiative for meat and poultry inspection; the label approval system; guidelines for determining whether certain products are covered by FSIS inspection laws or fall under Food and Drug Administration jurisdiction; the 1991 budget; the proposal for a one-year experiment exempting Canadian meat and poultry products from reinspection at the border; and the raw poultry microbial control project in Puerto Rico.

The committee provides recommendations to the secretary of agriculture on issues related to the federal meat and poultry inspection program.

The meeting is open to the public on a space available basis. Comments may be filed before or after the meeting and should be addressed to: Catherine DeRoever, Director, Executive Secretariat, USDA-FSIS, Room 3175-S, Washington, D.C. 20250. Background materials are available by contacting DeRoever at (202) 447-3002.

Jim Greene (202) 382-0314

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USDA RELEASES SIXTH ANNUAL GRAIN EXPORTS QUALITY REPORT

WASHINGTON, Sept. 12—A report released today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service shows that corn represented 47 percent of the total 118.8 million metric tons of grains and oilseeds exported in calendar year 1989. Wheat exports were 32 percent of the total and soybeans 13 percent. Sorghum, barley, oats, sunflower, and rye made up the balance of grain exports. All grains exported from the United States in 1989 met or exceeded the grade requirements of importer's contracts, the report showed

FGIS Administrator J.C. Foltz said, "Export crop quality in 1989 was nearly identical to 1988. Importers, in the case of yellow corn, specified a larger percentage of number 3 quality corn than has been the case in recent years'.

The FGIS report is based on data collected during the official inspection of export grain shipments. While the agency has produced summaries of exported U.S. wheat, corn and soybeans since 1984, the 1989 report is the second to cover all exported grains. In addition, this is the first year that soybean protein and oil factors are available in the report. These evaluations became available upon request starting September 1989.

Highlights of the 1989 report, based on comparisons to 1988 quality data, include the following:

—Yellow corn average damaged kernels (total) decreased by 0.3 percent from the previous year; broken corn and foreign materage

averages remained constant. Average moisture increased by 0.2 percent over 1988 values.

—For all wheat classes except Durum wheat, the predominant grade exported was U.S. No. 2. For Durum wheat, the predominant grade exported was U.S. No. 3. Over 98 percent of total wheat exports were U.S. No. 2 or better. The average protein for Hard Red Winter wheat increased from 11.8 in 1988 to 12.3 percent in 1989; and for Hard Red Spring wheat, the percent increase was from 13.9 to 14.6 percent.

—Soybean moisture content averages increased by 0.5 percent; average test weight for exported soybeans decreased by 0.1 pound per bushel. The averages for heat-damaged kernels, damaged kernels (total), and foreign material remained constant.

In compiling the 1989 report, FGIS analyzed inspection data representing 2.22 billion bushels of corn, 1.39 billion bushels of wheat, 549.2 million bushels of soybeans, 300.8 million bushels of sorghum, and 75.0 million bushels of other U.S. grains bound for export. The report provides averages by grade of quality factors such as test weight and amount of damaged kernels and foreign material.

For more information and copies of the 1989 U.S. Grain Exports Quality Report, write to Allen A. Atwood, USDA, FGIS, P.O. Box 6454, Washington, D.C. 20090-6454; FAX (202) 447-4628.

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YEUTTER POLICY PROMOTES ETHANOL USE IN USDA VEHICLES

WASHINGTON, Sep. 13—Following President Bush's initiative to reduce America's dependency on foreign oil, Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today announced a new departmental policy that requires employees to use ethanol or ETBE-blended gasoline in all U.S. Department of Agriculture-owned and leased vehicles when such fuels are available at prices comparable to regular unleaded gasoline.

“Using ethanol-blended gasoline in USDA cars and trucks is an opportunity to promote a ‘win-win’ situation,” Yeutter said. “Ethanol is produced from American corn and other agricultural products, and that's good for American farmers. But it also helps reduce our dependency on

foreign oil; and, as the president pointed out in his address to Congress Tuesday night, that's especially critical right now."

Gasolines blended with ethanol or ETBE (ethyl tertiary butyl ether) have been shown to reduce carbon monoxide emissions by as much as a third, depending on the vehicle make and model, and are a major component of the president's Clean Air initiative.

USDA operates a fleet of over 33,000 sedans, station wagons and light trucks in all 50 states. Though actual usage will be less because availability varies from state to state, if all of these vehicles were fueled with ethanol-blended gasoline, they would consume about 1.7 million gallons of ethanol per year, requiring 680,000 bushels of corn.

Noting that the use of ethanol and ETBE-blended gasoline has been approved by all automobile manufacturers, Yeutter went on to urge all USDA employees to use ethanol-based fuel in their personal vehicles.

"This is a great way for each of us, as individuals and as members of USDA, to demonstrate our commitment to America's farmers, America's environment and America's future," Yeutter said.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-46

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THIS WEEK'S HONEY-LOAN REPAYMENT LEVELS UNCHANGED

WASHINGTON, Sept. 13—Producers may repay their 1989 honey price-support loans at the following levels, according to Keith D. Bjerk executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation:

Weekly Honey-loan Repayment Levels, color and class, cents per pound, 1989 crop Table

White	40.0
Extra-light Amber	37.0
Light Amber	36.0
Amber	35.0
Nontable	33.0

The weekly repayment level for 1990-crop honey is 38.0 cents per pound for all colors, table and nontable grades.

Levels are unchanged from those announced last week.

Producers who redeem their honey pledged as loan collateral by repaying their honey-price support loans at these levels may not repledge the same honey as collateral for another loan.

Jane K. Phillips (202) 447-7601 8:00 am-4:30 pm EST

John C. Ryan (202) 447-8207 4:30 pm-5:30 pm EST

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